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THURSDAY
APRIL 15, 1954

John Hughes, Doug Dillon and myself had our weekly meeting this morning, and are anticipating with keen interest what the Cabinet may decide.

The Secretary left last night at eight o'clock. Previously he had seen Laniel and had, as I understand it, been assured the Cabinet would take appropriate action today regarding fixing a date for EDC debate, [redacted] I am inclined to think MacArthur's conversation with the Prime Minister on the night of April 13 may have had [redacted] influence in stiffening him up. This interchange is [redacted] interesting, and reads as follows in MacArthur's memorandum on the subject:

"At the request of Prime Minister Laniel I called on him privately last evening at 10:15 p.m. (he had sent word to me at the airport by M. Vidal, the Director of his Cabinet, that he would like to see me at the above-mentioned hour). We were alone except for Mme. Laniel, who sat quietly in another corner of the room.

"After the usual exchange of amenities I said to M. Laniel that we were very glad to know that on Thursday, April 15, the French Cabinet would at last fix the date for the Assembly debate on the EDC. M. Laniel immediately replied that the entire EDC situation was extremely difficult. The URAS and ARS were making great difficulties and he was apprehensive that a political crisis might ensue when the date for the debate was fixed by the government, and this crisis would involve the fall of the present government. If the present government fell, he did not see how it could be succeeded by any other government which would put the EDC through. He felt that if someone like Mendes-France formed a new government the situation with respect to both the EDC and Indochina would be virtually hopeless. Furthermore, to get a majority for EDC in the French Parliament he needed a few of the URAS and ARS votes, which he thought he could get if he maneuvered properly. Therefore, he was not certain that it would be wise tactically to insist on fixing the date for the debate on Thursday.

"I said to M. Laniel that I had known Chaban-Delmas, the leader of the URAS group. for some 15 years. [redacted]

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I said that I did not believe that Chaban-Delmas and his friends would ever go along with EDC. They were opposed to it and their efforts to postpone the fixing of the Assembly debate were simply a maneuver to postpone any decision until such time as EDC was virtually down the drain. I thought that if the consideration for postponing the debate was the hope of bringing Chaban-Delmas and his friends along in support of EDC, it was unsound.

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"M. Laniel said that his position was very difficult and he did not wish to take steps which would involve the fall of the French Government prior to Geneva. He was inclined to agree that most of the URAS and ARS would, in the final analysis, oppose the EDC but he still thought he could carry a few of them along with him.

"I replied that I did not share his view. I said that the Secretary expected upon his return to the United States on Thursday to be able to report to the President that M. Laniel and his government had finally set the date for the EDC debate. If this were not possible I thought that very grave consequences would ensue. I said that I would like to speak very frankly. In the past few weeks the United States had been approached by the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Benelux countries with a view to discussing alternative plans for the EDC which would ensure German association with the West, and participation in collective defense. These approaches had been made because there was a growing belief that France had lost the capacity to act or take any decisions which required courage. This incapacity to to face up to reality was rapidly undermining France's position as one of the leading powers of the free world. Thus far we had not discussed alternatives and other courses of action with our U.K., German and Benelux friends. However, if the French Government could not even fix the date of the debate, M. Laniel should know that we would be obliged to go quietly ahead and work out alternative courses of action. We would not announce publicly that we were doing this, since the French would construe any such announcement as a threat or blackmail. However, he should have no illusions. If France, by its inability to act, forced us to leave her behind, we would go on with the other nations which wished to survive. If the French Government did not fix the date of the debate on Thursday, I felt that we would soon have to begin to explore other courses of action to which we had given a great deal of thought and for which we had some plans.

"I said that the countries that were joined together in the collective enterprise of making Europe were like a group of mountain climbers who were roped together. They had left the last resting camp and were attacking the peak. The peak or summit as we saw it was our very survival. Half-way between the last camp and the peak one member of the group, France, suddenly refused to go forward or backward. It simply wished to camp on a ledge and remain there until it perished. It apparently not only wished to remain there alone, but wished the other members of the party to remain there and perish with it. The United States, as one member of the group, was not prepared to die simply because France wished to commit what amounted to suicide. Furthermore, we did not believe that the other members of the team who were roped together in this enterprise wished to perish because of lack of collective action. Therefore, the time had come when, if France would not budge, the rest of us must cut the rope and leave her on the ledge.

"In conclusion, I said I had one final observation to make about all this. M. Laniel and I were very old friends. We had worked together in the Resistance. I knew his courage and devotion to the cause of Franco-American understanding. To me it would be infinitely sad if he were Prime Minister

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presiding over a French government which, by its inaction, deliberately separated France from the United States and the other Western Allies and who would be responsible for France losing its position as a leader of the free world and becoming in effect another Belgium.

"M. Laniel said he recognized that the rest of the world could not wait indefinitely on France. However, his problems were very great. The constitution and the electoral law had resulted in a situation where it was impossible to govern France under the existing system. He wished to make it clear that he had not taken a decision not to fix the date of the Assembly debate on Thursday, but it was all very complicated.

"We then discussed Indochina briefly. M. Laniel said the effect of the gallant stand at Dien-Bien-Phu had greatly helped him in the Parliament because, except for the Communists, even those members who wish to withdraw from Indochina do not feel that they can say anything which would undermine the morale of Colonel de Castries' forces defending Dien-Bien-Phu. However, if Dien-Bien-Phu falls a most serious situation will result.

"I said to M. Laniel that I recalled the assurances, that his government would take no action which directly or indirectly would turn Indochina over to the Communists, which he had given me when I saw him last July regarding increased U.S. assistance for the Indochinese war. I also recalled that he had given similar assurances informally to the President at Bermuda. I said that we knew that his determination not to turn Indochina over to the Communists was unshakeable and this had been one of the considerations which had led us to massively increase our aid to the French, including many additional aircraft and other types of supplies.

"M. Laniel reaffirmed that he would not be a party to turning the area over to the Communists. He said, however, that the situation was very difficult in France because of war weariness and a desire on the part of many people to get out of Indochina at any cost.

"I said that there was one thing the French could do rapidly to aid in the defense of Dien-Bien-Phu and the improvement of their military position in Indochina. This was to send additional aviation mechanics and maintenance personnel speedily to the area. I said that there was such a shortage of personnel of this category that the French were not able to maintain and make full operational use of the aircraft they now had in Indochina and that for the U.S. to furnish additional aircraft did not make much sense if there were not the flight and maintenance personnel to operate them. M. Laniel said that he was not aware of this and I had the impression that he had not been brought very fully into the picture by the French National Defense people with regard to the difficulties of the French air forces in Indochina, stemming in considerable part from the lack of qualified personnel."

Yesterday Chaban-Delmas and Ulver called on Doug Dillon and said they had understood the U. S. Government had delivered an ultimatum to Laniel saying that

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the U. S. would withdraw from its NATO responsibilities unless the French Cabinet speedily fixed a date for the EDC debate. Dillon told them this was entirely untrue and no ultimatum of this or any other nature had been given. It sounds as if the Prime Minister had been trying to pacify the ex-Gaullists by shifting the blame on the United States if any action were to be taken.

Marquis Childs came to see me before lunch. He had returned to Paris to pick up what information he could about the Indo-China negotiations between the U. S. and French Governments.

Late this morning we received word that in the Cabinet meeting it had been decided to ask the Steering Committee of the Assembly on May 18 to fix a date shortly thereafter if the preliminary conditions had then been met. Also it seems that Laniel and Bidault will, in writing, give Mollet the necessary promises of support for democratic control over the European Army which will enable him to call his party congress.

We are inquiring of Washington, at the request of Bidault, whether the U. S. assurances should be made public tomorrow following their transmission to NATO and the Prime Ministers of the six nations.

I lunched with Nancy Lancaster at Chez Marius. Afterwards we made a quick tour of two antique shops and I returned here to talk to Tommy about the trip of Cleveland and himself yesterday to Bonn. There they met Hallstein, Blankenhorn, and other Germans to discuss the Franco-German differences on the Saar. Our people found the Germans insisting upon certain economic interpretations of the Van Naters report from which they must recede if an agreement is to be reached. The French have remained securely poised on the Schumann draft, which, as presently written and construed, is in many important particulars unacceptable to the Germans. We hope shortly to receive word from Washington instructing

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the British and American Embassies here to intervene in the affair.

Came down to Versailles and spent the night.

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FRIDAY
JUNE 4, 1954

I had a talk with Jim Hunt this morning. He was followed by Arthur Roseborough, in connection with whose visit I wrote the following letter [illegible]

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Plans about the Ambassadors' meeting have now jelled. It is to be held in London on June 9 and 10, so I shall go over there on the 8th and probably remain until the 11th. Evangeline will come over on the 9th. Everyone seems to be happy, or reconciled to this decision. I talked to Jim Conant in Berlin and cancelled my engagement to meet Monnet and himself in Luxembourg next Tuesday.

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FRIDAY
JUNE 4, 1954

Lansing Warren came to see me this afternoon. We talked, amongst other things, of that wonderful personality Anne McCormick, whose recent death distressed her multitude of friends. He said the New York Times, in speaking of her age, had made one of its few deliberate errors. She was actually 76, although she was reported to have been 72 at the time of her death.

Mr. von Walther called with a telegram instructing him to read me a letter which it was proposed should be sent by the Chancellor to Teitgen. This was a different draft from the one [redacted] Ophuls had taken up with us yesterday. I made the same objections to it. We must rely, at least until the week end is over, on Teitgen visiting Bidault at Geneva on Sunday and trying to persuade Bidault to accept the Strasbourg agreement as drafted. Von Walther thought his superiors would abandon the letter idea [redacted] with the greatest reluctance, so I decided to telephone Hallstein about it.

Meanwhile, de Staercke informed me he had talked to Alphand and Hallstein recently on the vexatious protocol question, and thought some progress had been made so that a meeting of the Directing Committee a week from today might be possible, to be followed a few days later by a Foreign Ministers' meeting.

We had an office gathering to consider what line we should take at the Ambassadors' Conference, and are presently inclined to favor the convocation by Spaak of the four EDC signatories and the U.K. and U.S.

Tommy and I had a talk about the Adenauer letter. Tonight Hallstein called me from Bonn. I explained to him as best I could on the telephone why it seemed to us advisable for Adenauer to take no action until Teitgen [redacted] had an opportunity on Sunday at Geneva to try to persuade Bidault to his point of view. Hallstein said the Chancellor was off on a trip and it would be [redacted] difficult to stop this letter. However, he would attempt to do so, in which event some man in his confidence would call on me at 9:00 o'clock Tuesday to talk to me before I'm off to London.